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"The First Resurrection" and "the Second Death" in the Apocalypse

THE trouble begins in Rev. ii, 11, where, for the first time in the New Testament, we have the curious phrase ὁ δεύτερος θάνατος. A promise is made to the suffering Church at Smyrna, one of the two of the "seven Churches" against which no reproach is brought. For Smyrna the message forecasts a time of persecution and martyrdom and then makes the promise: ὁ νικῶν οὐ μὴ ἀδικηθῇ ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου τοῦ δευτέρου. Obviously these Christians *have already* passed through "the first death" and "the first resurrection."[1] It is perhaps significant too that the title by which our Lord is introduced to the Church at Smyrna is ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἔσχατος, ὃς ἐγένετο νεκρὸς καὶ ἔζησεν. He was the source of the power conveyed by "the first death" and "the first resurrection."

But the trouble gets worse when we come to Rev. xx, 5, 6; xx, 14; and xxi, 8, where "the first resurrection" is mentioned in xx, 5, 6 and "the second death" in xx, 6; xx, 14; and xxi, 8, here found in connexion with the only reference to what has come to be familiarly known as "the millennium." From earliest times until now these later references to "the first resurrection" and "the second death" have been the happy hunting-ground of those who find a special delight in bizarre speculations as to the millennial reign of Christ upon earth. I want to suggest that there is no ground for this whatever, that it is all due to misunderstanding of the term "first resurrection" and its implied counterpart "first death."

The real difficulty is with the apocalyptic passage in Rev. xx, 4-10, and I readily admit that it looks as if we have here some curious piece of Christian eschatology, which declares that things are to happen in the following order:

1. Satan is to be bound for 1,000 years.
2. At the same time the *saints* are to be raised from the dead and reign with Christ on earth for 1,000 years ("the first resurrection").
3. At the end of this period Satan is to be loosed for a while to deceive the nations.

[1] Of the four terms used in this article, only two are found in the New Testament —*i.e.*, "first resurrection" and "second death." But the counterparts of each of these terms are certainly implied. "The first resurrection" implies a "first death" which precedes it, and "the second death" implies a "second resurrection" which also precedes it. The order of events is, then, "first death" and "first resurrection," "second resurrection" and "second death," the "second death" being final and irrevocable.

4. Then Satan is to be finally bound and *all* are to be raised from the dead for judgment ("the second resurrection").
5. Death and hell and the wicked are to be cast into the lake of fire ("the second death").

It certainly looks as if this is what is said, especially if we fail to remember that in most apocalypses (and not least in that of John) the past, present, and future are so mixed up that it is extremely difficult to disentangle them. Time seems to be quite irrelevant.

Now the commentaries are amazingly unhelpful at this point, unless they be commentaries written by millenarians! The early Fathers, too, give little guidance, though even the Chiliasts amongst them never run to the extremes of later millenarian commentators, which is perhaps significant. Most of the early Fathers leave the passage severely alone. Only one helpful thing has come to my notice from the writings of the second century—a passage from *The Shepherd of Hermas*. To it I shall refer below.

With regard to "the second death" there need be no disagreement. It is universally interpreted as referring to the consummation of all things, and denotes the fate of those who reject God. Charles (I.C.C.) points out that it was a current rabbinic phrase, carrying this meaning, and that it was so employed by the Jewish writer of the Apocalypse. He gives examples from the Jerusalem Targum: on Deut. xxxiii, 6, "Let Reuben live in this age and not die the second death"; on Jer. li, 39, 57, "Let them die the second death and not live in the next world."

The real trouble is with "the first death" and "the first resurrection." I suggest that we can best discover what the early Christians meant by such expressions, not by paying attention to the admittedly difficult passages in the latter part of the Apocalypse, but by considering what we know of the early Christian view of death. If the Rabbis regarded "the first death" as referring to what we ordinarily mean by "death," there is no reason to suppose that Christians adopted this rabbinic teaching. Indeed, it was just on this question of death that they were bound to differ from rabbinic teaching, because they had a new factor to deal with—the death and resurrection of Jesus. Indeed, we know that early Christians avoided speaking of "death" as such. They said of one of their number who met death, "he is fallen on sleep." I suggest that the story of Lazarus in St John xi is a discussion of this difference of view on death, carried on between Church and Synagogue. In v. 24 Martha expresses the Pharisaic view: "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus answers, giving the Christian point of view: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die." It has not always been noticed that there are *two* quite different things stated here about believers in Christ, and they are stated in contrast to the normal Pharisaic doctrine of death and resurrection. I suggest that "he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," refers to "the first death" and "the first resurrection." Those who have passed through this experience

cannot ever be touched by death—that is, by "the second death" or final judgment; they are alive for evermore. "Whosoever liveth and believeth in Me shall never die": this is the blessed condition of Christians; they do not die. For them death is vanquished.

The same question is under discussion in the fifth chapter of St John's gospel. Verses 24-25 state, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, *hath* everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but *is passed* from death unto life. ['The first death' and 'the first resurrection.'] Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, *and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Here "the first death" and "the first resurrection" are clearly indicated, though the terms are not used, and connected with the preaching of the Gospel. Then follows (vv. 28, 29) an account of the last judgment, "the second resurrection" and "the second death": "Marvel not at this: for the hour *is coming*, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." I think it is clear that in the Fourth Gospel we have the same set of ideas at work which operate in the passages we have considered in the Apocalypse, though the actual terms are not used. There is "the first death" and "the first resurrection"; "the second resurrection" and "the second death." And in the Fourth Gospel, as in the Apocalypse, it is clear that on those who have taken part in "the first resurrection" "the second death" hath no power, or, as the Fourth Gospel puts it, they "have everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but are passed from death to life."

What, then, do "the first death" and "the first resurrection" refer to? I suggest that they refer to Baptism, and that when this is understood, as it would be understood by the first readers of the Apocalypse, the millenarianism of Rev. xx disappears. What we have instead is a picture of the Church in heaven and the Church on earth reigning with Christ. The earliest developed doctrine of Baptism is that of St Paul, stated in Rom. vi, 4-11. This is the doctrine of death, burial, and resurrection. A doctrine of later origin is that of regeneration (St John iii, 5; Titus iii, 5); but, though this later doctrine becomes definitive for early Christianity, it by no means displaces the earlier Pauline doctrine. When we look at the statement of St Paul's doctrine, it becomes crystal clear, it seems to me, that "the first death" and "the first resurrection" can have no other reference than to Christian Baptism. Baptism is set forth as a death, burial, and resurrection—a co-experiencing of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. What happened to Him happens to the convert. The symbolism of the rite was significant, and we must remember that for St Paul it was not merely "suggestive symbolism" but "acted symbolism." Something was actually done in the rite. The convert was made a sharer in Christ's action in dying and rising again, and if "he was dead *with* Christ" he also shared in the resurrection, he was "alive *with* Christ." As to Christ, "death had no more dominion over Him," and so it was also with the believer who died *with* Him, was buried *with* Him, and rose *with* Him. Baptism conferred eternal life

here and now, as Barnabas declares (see chap. xi). The death which the Christian died was not associated with the cemetery but with the font.

Now there is striking confirmation of this in that strange document, *The Shepherd of Hermas*, in the ninth similitude, chap. xvi. It seems to me that here Hermas is thinking in terms of Rev. xx, though he never directly refers to the book. He is concerned about the fate of the Patriarchs of old, who had not received the seal of Baptism. He imagines that one of the tasks of the original Apostles and Teachers (who are represented by the symbolic term "the forty stones") was to preach Christ to the people in Hades, and to baptize those who believed. These souls from Hades are seen to ascend out of the pit through the waters of Baptism. "They were obliged to ascend through water in order to be made alive . . . accordingly those who had fallen asleep received the seal of the Son of God. For, before a man bears the name of the Son of God he is dead; but when he receives the seal he lays aside his deadness, and obtains life. The seal, then, is the water: *they descend into the water dead, and they rise alive.* And to them, accordingly, was the seal preached, and they made use of it that they might enter into the Kingdom of God." In the vision, not only had the Patriarchs gone through the waters of Baptism, but also "the forty stones," and Hermas has some difficulty in understanding this, for the Apostles and Teachers *had already* passed through the waters of Baptism whilst in this life. He asks the question, "Why did the forty stones also ascend with them out of the pit, having already received the seal?" The answer is not very convincing: "Because these Apostles and Teachers who preached the name of the Son of God, after falling asleep [note, not 'dying'] in the power and faith of the Son of God, not only preached it to those who were asleep, but themselves also gave them the seal of the preaching. Accordingly they descended with them into the water, and again ascended." That this answer was somewhat unsatisfactory is shown by a difference here between the text of the MS discovered at Mount Athos (our only real source, apart from quotations in the Fathers, for the Greek text) and the text as revealed by the versions, and quotations in Clement of Alexandria. The Mount Athos MS omits the following further explanation, and it may or may not represent the original text in this respect. The difficulty is that without this further explanation we get something which looks like re-baptism of "the forty stones." To give a different flavour the following illuminating explanation is added: "But these [*i.e.* 'the forty stones'] descended *alive* and rose up again *alive*; whereas those who had previously fallen asleep descended *dead*, but rose up again *alive*."

There can be little doubt that here we are discussing the same things that are discussed in Rev. xx, "the first death" and "the first resurrection." The building of the Church (here described as "The Tower") is going forward on earth and beyond the earth, in the spirit world. We have the same association of the Church in heaven and the Church on earth; and here at least "the first death" and "the first resurrection" refer to Baptism. We must further remember that *The Shepherd of Hermas* had the same kind of vogue in that ancient world which *The*

Pilgrim's Progress had in ours a generation or two ago, and, like *The Pilgrim's Progress*, it put into allegorical and popular form ideas which were current in the Christian community.

Now, with this in our minds, let us turn back to the passages in the Apocalypse. And, in doing so, let us remember that the first time the expression "the second death" is used (ii, 11) it carries with it the implication that the Christians of Smyrna *had already* experienced "the first death" and "the first resurrection." We turn, then, to Rev. xx, and we find:

1. The devil is bound for 1,000 years (vv. 1-3). The 1,000 is a symbolic number, as most numbers are in the Apocalypse, and need not worry us. The crippling of Satan is accomplished, according to the general teaching of the New Testament, by the death and resurrection of our Lord: "That through death he might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is the devil" (Heb. ii, 14. See also Col. ii, 10; Eph. i, 20-23; and many other passages). The crippling of Satan was therefore *already accomplished* when the Apocalypse was written.

2. Dominions for judgment are set up (v. 4), and Christ reigns with His saints, who are both in heaven and on earth, for 1,000 years (v. 5). This is the Church both triumphant and militant, set in the world for the judgment of God on the world. One of the functions of the Church in the world is to judge the world by her *witness* (μαρτύριον) to God in Christ. (*Cf.* St John xii, 31; xvi.) Here again the number 1,000 is symbolic.

3. During this period the non-Christian "dead" are inactive in contrast to Christians who have "fallen on sleep" and are part of the Church triumphant (v. 5).

4. This is the period of "the first resurrection" (and by implication of "the first death")—that is, the period when Baptism is administered to bring men and women into Christ. Those who share in this are "blessed and holy"; they are "priests of God and Christ," and reign with Christ, whether they are martyred or continue to live on earth (vv. 5, 6). (*Cf.* 1 Peter ii, 5.)

5. At the end of this historical period, just before the consummation, there is to be a period of great evil—Satan is to be loosed (vv. 7-9). This is a view common to most apocalypses—things will get suddenly worse before the end.

6. Then comes the consummation of history and the final judgment (vv. 10, 11).

7. This is accompanied by "the second resurrection" or general resurrection (vv. 12, 13).

8. "The second death"—death and hell are cast into "the lake of fire" (v. 14).

9. Then immediately follows the vision of "the new heaven and the new earth"—"the heavenly Jerusalem" in chap. xxi.

What we find is that the millennium, as generally understood by millenarians (that is, a visible reign of Christ on earth amongst His disciples literally risen from their graves, for a literal thousand years), has disappeared (no doubt into the bottomless pit!), and the eschat-

ology of the Apocalypse is no different from that of other parts of the New Testament. What the writer wished to convey to his readers was that Christ was in their midst while they were enduring persecution, and that, whether they lived or suffered martyrdom, there could no hurt come near them.

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Planning and Religion

To review together Mr Christopher Dawson's *The Judgement of the Nations*[1] and Dr Karl Mannheim's *Diagnosis of our Time*[2] would be unjustifiable were it possible to do justice to either in less than an essay of the old quarterly size. For to discuss either at all adequately would be to discuss also, not necessarily the whole of each author's past work, but the development of certain dominant ideas throughout that work. Otherwise, one is obliged to assume an acquaintance with Dr Mannheim's previous book, *Man and Society*, and with at least two earlier books by Mr Dawson, *Religion and the Modern State* and *Beyond Politics*. Some of Dr Mannheim's ideas have, I suspect, obtained currency among persons who either have not read *Man and Society* or have not wholly digested that massive and difficult work; I wish that there was more evidence that Mr Dawson's two books, which contain some of the wisest and most penetrating criticism that has been made of contemporary politics, culture and religion, had been read at all. The two books under review occupy a somewhat similar position in their authors' works. They consist of closely related essays, written at various times during the war; some of Mr Dawson's have appeared, in the same or an earlier form, in *The Dublin Review*; Dr Mannheim's—which he subtitles "wartime essays of a sociologist"—were composed primarily for discussion in private groups. Both volumes were evidently constructed, as all work of profound and conscientious thinking at the present time must be, under considerable difficulty; they are certainly as important as any books on social problems which have appeared during these last three years.

Neither considerations of space nor the foregoing parallel, however, is sufficient to justify considering the books together. But if we find a point upon which they converge, and consider the differences and similarities in their approach, the result—when we have to do with two writers both of great distinction, engaged in different special studies and possessing different backgrounds—may be of some profit. As the questions with which they are concerned are closely related, and as the authors are quite aware of each other's work, the point of convergence is not difficult to find. Mr Dawson says (p. 81): "Is it possible to develop a planned culture which will be free? Or does cultural planning necessarily involve a totalitarian state? This is the question

[1] Sheed and Ward, 8s. 6d. [2] Kegan Paul, 10s.

that Dr Mannheim deals with in the final chapters of his book, *Man and Society*." He proceeds, in the next page or two, to discuss Mannheim's solution, and finds two difficulties:

> First, that a social science such as he desiderates hardly exists as yet, though we can see its beginnings.
>
> Secondly, that the remoulding of human nature is a task that far transcends politics, and that if the State is entrusted with this task it will inevitably destroy human freedom in a more fundamental way than even the totalitarian states have yet attempted to do.
>
> Those states do, however, show us the risks of a wholesale planning which sacrifices the liberties and spiritual values of the older type of culture for the sake of power and immediate success. The planning of culture cannot be taken in a dictatorial spirit, like a rearmament plan. Since it is a much higher and more difficult task than any economic organization, it demands greater resources of powers of knowledge and understanding. It must, in fact, be undertaken in a really religious spirit.

Dr Mannheim would not, I think, disagree with this affirmation; but his statement of it would be very different. It would be much less simple; that is partly because he is a sociologist, with no dogmatic religious faith such as Mr Dawson's, and partly because he is Mannheim.

Sociology is already a recognized science with an immense body of literature and a formidable, though brief, tradition; it is (as Dr Mannheim says) the science of Human Behaviour, synthesizing and comprehending such more restricted sciences of human behaviour as economics and psychology. Already we need another science, the science of the Behaviour of Sociologists. I mean that the moment the sociologist ceases to confine himself to description within his own terms, and to offering dispassionate predictions of the results of two or more alternative procedures, the moment he betrays any emotional interest in what has happened or in what will happen, elements too personal to be part of the "science" come into play: they appear to us, when we disagree, as *prejudice*, and when we agree, as *wisdom*. I think that Dr Mannheim has a generous share of wisdom, and he would be a singular human being if he had no prejudices; and, besides being a sociologist, he has unusual intuition in matters of art and religion. And furthermore (as one would expect) he has a very complex and fascinating personality, which is by no means unapparent even in the scientific rigours. Not the least of the ardours demanded of his reader is the continuous alertness necessary to decide which side of him is, at the moment, uppermost. There is first of all, of course, the sociologist.

> Child psychology, educational psychology, criminology, experimental psychology, psycho-analysis collected a whole store of material which was ready to be co-ordinated and integrated into a Science of Human Behaviour.

There is a more passionate voice, which speaks sometimes almost in the accents of *The New Statesman*:

> All of us know that the greatest oppression in history is not that of the slaves, serfs or wage-earning labourers, but that of women in patriarchal society.

There is a third voice, which would not be heard in *The New Statesman* at all, and which says:

> There will, therefore, in every planned society, be a body somehow similar to the priests, whose task it will be to watch that certain basic standards are established and maintained. . . .
>
> It will become more and more a question whether something corresponding to the monastic seclusion, some form of complete or temporary withdrawal from the affairs of the world, will not be one of the great remedies for the dehumanizing effect of a civilization of busybodies. If this is so, this monastic seclusion will once more have two functions. The first will be to provide an opportunity for those who, so to speak, specialize in religious experience, and whose one task is to transmit the spirit once revealed to later generations without themselves making the adjustments to the new surroundings. These will be the guardians of the spirit, to whom the purity of the deeper experience is more important than its contemporaneity. But there will be, secondly, more secular "orders" into which the active politician and business man can withdraw for a while for contemplation, and so make contact with those who are less involved in the struggle for existence.

This is more like Mr Gerald Heard, but more Christian as well as more human, than the programme presented in *Man the Master*.

The paper from which these last two quotations are taken, "Towards a New Social Philosophy," is of peculiar importance for Christian readers, being subtitled "A Challenge to Christian Thinkers by a Sociologist." Dr Mannheim believes, I think, that the religious element (I am trying to speak his language, not mine) is necessary. For on the one hand "a planned society cannot be built on the neutralized attitudes of the late Liberal age, in which all the values tended to cancel each other out." On the other hand, a planned society which ignores religious values will end in some form of totalitarianism (in this country, probably in what Mr Dawson calls a "totalitarian democracy"). The planning must be done, therefore, with a view to leaving open the place which only a religious reawakening can fill: only "the conditions under which these deeper experiences will flourish can be planned." It will be noted that Dr Mannheim, as a sociologist, is concerned with religion only as "religious experience"—with religion as a feeling experienced by individual human beings; and we may ask, in passing, whether such a description from outside can ever be quite satisfactory, since a necessary condition of that feeling is a belief that certain statements about the universe, about Man and God, are *true*, and a religious "experience" without dogma is very different from the experience of believing a dogma. But I find a difficulty in the assertion that the *conditions* for a religious revival (leaving the revival itself to the Spirit) can be planned. If we build a house, and await the appearance of an interior decorator of genius before covering the walls and floors and purchasing furniture, we know that certain things about that house are settled: we do not expect the decorator to take it to pieces and reconstruct it according to another plan, in the course of carrying out his beautification. But if we plan a society, leaving space for religion to fill when it turns up, how do we know that the form in which it may arrive will fit the place that we have left for it? Dr Mannheim himself may be quite prepared to accept the most drastic alterations, but perhaps it will be too late?

Will, for instance, the "body somewhat similar to the priests," which we learned of in my last quotation, be any more prepared to make room for genuine priests than Pharaoh's experts were to make room for Moses and Aaron? Unless the religious inspiration is already present, in designing the general plan, I doubt whether it is likely to find a warm welcome later.

This difficulty also comes to light in Dr Mannheim's use of the word *basic*. He tells us that "the Christian does not merely want to adjust himself to an environment, but wants to do so only through patterns of action which are in harmony with his basic experience of life. . . . Christian action has its direction, since it is possessed with a basic vision of life, and although this has to be reinterpreted it does not wither away." But he had previously said:

> To put it quite briefly, we must establish a set of basic virtues such as decency, mutual help, honesty and social justice, which can be brought home through education and social influence, whereas the higher forms of thought, art, literature, etc., remain as free as they were in the philosophy of Liberalism. It must be one of our main concerns to establish the list of those primary virtues without which no civilization can exist, and which make for the basic conformity which gives stability and soundness to social life.

The question is, Which is the more basic—the Christian vision of life or the primary virtues of social survival? This seems to bring us bang to the question of natural law, upon which I am too prudent here to venture; but we may ask whether it is possible to determine, establish and maintain these social virtues, unless there is some kind of religious vision of life about the place.

I am also troubled by the emphasis on *novelty* in Dr Mannheim's vision of religious revival. He says truly of the "New Spirit" that "we cannot create it. Only if it is already at work can we strengthen those tendencies in it which we desire to prevail"—and only if it is already at work, we may add, is there much hope that it and our planned society can unite successfully. But he has said earlier:

> After all, a Cathedral Mass is also a spiritualized collective ecstatic experience. The problem, therefore, is rather to find *new forms of spiritualization* [italics mine] than completely to deny the potentialities inherent in the new forms of group existence.

I hope I am wrong in interpreting these remarks as assuming that the Cathedral Mass is no longer capable of satisfying the human need for collective ecstasy. But much earlier he has said:

> If one takes the attitude that the truth of Christianity is laid down in certain clear-cut statements which have supra-temporal validity, there will be small scope for sociological thinking. . . . If in contrast to this one holds the view that the fundamental Christian attitudes have not been laid down in terms of rigid rules, but have rather been given in concrete paradigmata which only point in the direction where Right is to be sought, then there is scope left for creative contribution in every new epoch.

It seems odd that Dr Mannheim, who in the same essay has criticized Modernism with penetration, should commit himself to this statement. In this passage, we observe that one alternative is an *attitude* and the

other a *view*; that the first is concerned with the *truth* of Christianity, while the word *attitude* is called upon to do fresh duty in the second. The first, moreover, seems to point to the Creeds ("clear-cut statements"), but the second substitutes for the "clear-cut statements" "rigid rules"—which are not the same thing. I am, therefore, not convinced that the religion, the place for which his planners are to be planning, is likely to be Christianity; any more than I am convinced that they will be able to plan the place for it unless they already believe it, or are inspired by the Holy Ghost to act as if they did. It is, as Mr Dawson says, "easy for a planned society to incorporate the least vital elements of organized Christianity at its lowest level of spiritual vitality."

I am not (I must explain) anxious to find flaws or ambiguities in Dr Mannheim's argument, and not at all to depreciate an impressive and important work. It is rather that I feel sure that this work is going to have a considerable influence and am by no means confident that the results of this influence will even be such as Dr Mannheim himself would approve. It is a very complex work, demanding close study; and with such a work people find it easier to accept whatever fits, or appears to fit, with the furniture already in their minds, than to understand a whole which will contain much that is unfamiliar and much that imposes re-examination of the opinions they already hold. I regard it as unfortunate, for example, that we shall have the need, the opportunity, and the enthusiasm for a great deal of rebuilding and town planning, at a period in which there exists no great architectural style in which to build; similarly, as a consideration at least recommending caution, that we should have the need, the opportunity, and the enthusiasm for extensive social replanning at a time when values are so confused, and when popular approval is so easily obtained for both the untried and the discredited, for both the callow and the jejune.

I must remind the reader again that each of these volumes is a collection of essays, and that each contains so much thought of immediate value that a dozen reviews of this length would not exhaust the matter of discussion.

T. S. Eliot.

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A Modern Synagogue Sermon

[*Note.*—We recently published an ancient synagogue sermon (see Theology, September, 1942, p. 164). The sermon that follows was delivered in the Cambridge Synagogue on December 12, 1942. Sidrah means the portion of the Law to be read in the synagogue on a Sabbath. This Sabbath's Sidrah was the Sidrah "Mikketz" (Genesis xli, 1—xliv, 17), so called because the second word of the Sidrah is Mikketz, which means "at the end." Bar Mitzvah corresponds in some respects to our Confirmation service; its celebration takes place on the Sabbath after the boy's thirteenth birthday, and the boy himself (Bernard, in this case) reads the Sidrah on that Sabbath.—Ed.: Theology.]

My dear Bernard,—If your Bar Mitzvah had been 2,000 or 1,500 years ago, in the Talmudic period, the speaker would probably have made

some comments on the opening part of your Sidrah, the usual thing, one would suppose, at that time on such occasions. As it would be preposterous to compete with the speakers of that age, it may be as well to-day to say a few words on the ending of your Sidrah.

It is indeed a most remarkable ending; at first sight, it might seem to be no proper ending at all. For your Sidrah ends right in the middle of an episode. If I may recall it, Joseph, who has had his cup put in Benjamin's bag, accuses Benjamin of having stolen the cup. The brothers cannot deny the accusation, since the cup is found in Benjamin's bag. But as they would not dare to return to their father without Benjamin, his favourite son, they ask Joseph to keep them all as his slaves for the theft. Joseph, however, replies that he will keep as slave only him who stands convicted, Benjamin; the others, he says, may return in peace to their father. Here the Sidrah ends. The story is not finished—we shall read the final act next Sabbath—but the Sidrah ends; and the question arises, Why does the Sidrah end here? or, more precisely, Why did the Rabbis who made the arrangement of the Pentateuch which we follow (for there are other arrangements), why did they decide that the Sidrah should end here, though the story is not completed?

The two main reasons seem to be these: first, a formal, literary reason; and secondly, a reason having regard to the idea expressed in this ending. The first reason is of a formal, literary nature. The last words of your Sidrah, by which Joseph tells his brothers to go back without Benjamin, are, "Get you up in peace unto your father." This, from the formal point of view, is a happy ending. The words, "Return in peace to your father," from the formal point of view, constitute a happy ending: and the Rabbis liked to end on a formal, happy note of this kind. It is noteworthy, for example, that some of the less cheerful tractates of the Mishna—such as Yoma, Sota or Makkoth—have a cheerful passage added to them as ending. This predilection of the Rabbis for formal, happy endings is based not only on a fairly general, human, sentimental feeling, but also on a deep-rooted religious belief: the belief that happy endings bring luck, point towards a pleasant future. One root of the happy endings of modern literature is those ancient happy endings that were, in a sense, omens, forecasting and foreshaping the future.

But there is a second reason why the Rabbis made your Sidrah end where it does, and this is not a formal reason. Your Sidrah ends with a magnificent idea, the idea of individual responsibility as against communal responsibility. In ancient times, even among less primitive nations, the principle of communal responsibility was prevalent; in other words, it was customary, when a man committed a crime, to punish not only that man but the whole community in which he lived—his family, for example, or his town or his nation. Unfortunately, this idea is very rife again in our own time. The shooting of innocent hostages because another member of the community has committed sabotage, the making responsible all Jews for what one of them or a few of them may do, the demand for mass punishment of the Germans after the war irrespective of guilt, are all bad revivals of the idea of

communal responsibility. The Bible, except in a few cases, requires that we observe the principle of individual responsibility. Only the sinner is to be punished, not his family, not his town. Your Sidrah ends by a proclamation of this principle of individual responsibility. Joseph says that only Benjamin, who is convicted of theft, shall be his slave; the others shall be free and may return to their father. This is individual responsibility. The actual criminal alone is to be punished, not his family and friends. It is true that Joseph proclaims this principle in order to tease his brothers. For he knows that they cannot go back to their father without Benjamin. But this only shows what the Bible shows by so many of its stories: that the development of even the greatest ideas is bound up with human frailty and error. The fact remains that Joseph expresses here the idea of individual responsibility.

One more point about this. Modern authorities are very nearly agreed that the principle of individual responsibility was not known to the Jews before the time of Isaiah or even Ezekiel. That famous injunction in Deuteronomy, "The fathers shall not be put to death for their children . . .," in the view of leading scholars, is due to writers living at the time of Isaiah or Ezekiel. But these scholars have entirely overlooked the fact that the idea of individual responsibility occurs here, in the ending of your Sidrah, and is introduced as a great, important matter. "God forbid," says Joseph, "that I should do so" —namely, punish the others with Benjamin. The stories of Joseph, according to most authorities, go back to a very early age. Therefore, the theory that the principle of individual responsibility was not known to the Jews before the era of the prophets seems to require considerable modification.

To sum up, the Rabbis had two reasons for making your Sidrah end where it ends, in the middle of an episode. First, a formal reason: they liked a formal, happy ending and they found one in the words, "Get you up in peace unto your father." Secondly, a reason having regard to the idea expressed in this ending: they liked to end by a proclamation of the principle of individual responsibility, one of the fundamental principles of our religion. Only the actual sinner is to be punished, not his family, not his community.

I am sure that while you prepared your Sidrah, which you read so well, you found a good many other inspiring ideas in it. We all wish you that you may continue to study this Sidrah, and the whole Torah, with great success, under the excellent guidance of your parents, and that you may "go from strength to strength until you appear before God in Zion."

"The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: the Lord turn His face unto thee, and give thee peace."

David Daube.

Gonville and Caius College,
Cambridge.

BOOK REVIEWS

Science and Ethics. An Essay by C. H. Waddington, with a discussion between the author and others. George Allen and Unwin. 7s. 6d.

The Beginning and End of the World. Riddell Memorial Lectures by E. T. Whittaker. Oxford University Press. 2s. 6d.

"So long as we remain within the purely scientific circle of ideas, the world may be regarded as a mechanism, functioning in a regular order under the rule of timeless laws; but the birth and extinction of the universe are at a frontier where this representation ceases to be valid: they can be understood only by bringing into consideration those aspects of reality which are ignored by science and interpreted by religion alone." On the second page of his printed lectures Professor Whittaker uses this paragraph to outline his general attitude on the subject of the relations of religion and science; and with this in view it is difficult to see how the author intended the subsequent and very readable outline of physics and astronomy to be relevant to the title of his book. At most he succeeds in showing that the results of the sciences considered are not sufficient to give a satisfactorily self-consistent explanation of the universe; if this was his aim he has succeeded; and his lectures can be recommended as a well written and concise statement of some of the findings of the exact sciences suitable for an intelligent reader who may not be deeply versed in their technical language.

Dr Waddington's symposium is of an entirely different type. The book consists of an essay by Dr Waddington followed by comments and counter-comments which give the rest of the book rather the atmosphere of a debate. It is impossible in a review to give an adequate survey of the ground covered in the contributions of the various collaborators, and in any case much of it is only indirectly relevant to the real thesis of the original essay. The editor's contention is that while ethics corresponds to something real and necessary in experience, it does not necessarily involve an appeal to supernatural sanction. The subsequent discussion tends to ignore this main point and to degenerate into a series of debating points which do not help to make things clearer. A notable exception to this criticism is the contribution of Dr Karin Stephen on the psychological side.

There is little in the *positive* assertions of the essay with which a Christian would quarrel; but he would question very strongly the adequacy and in some cases the correctness of the basis of the main theme, which is a revival of the "naturalistic ethics" analysed so ably by Sorley in his *Ethics of Naturalism* (second edition, 1904). The real points of contention are philosophical and not scientific; and in the reviewer's opinion there is little to be added, even in 1943, to what Professor Sorley said about similar attempts forty or more years ago. Anyone seriously studying the matter cannot afford to neglect Sorley's work. The main defect of Waddington's argument is that it depends

not only on the existence but upon the recognition of a "trend" in evolution. If there is nothing external by which to judge, it would seem that the position is like that of a swimmer in an ocean relying on his ability to detect the general trend of the current in order that he may swim with it and not against it; if there really is nothing apart from the water and objects floating in it to be observed, then only local eddies and not a general current can be detected. To the theist, Waddington's position becomes significant only if there is something outside the process of evolution in terms of which it can be interpreted, and it is a pity that the scientist who may be rightly cautious of using teleological concepts in his science is also frightened of using them in his *interpretation* of science; and, as Sorley points out, a proximate end is no substitute for an ultimate end; for either the next stage is independent of human volition and therefore renders ethical considerations superfluous, or depends upon it and therefore can hardly be used as its only guide. It is very necessary to distinguish between the course of evolution as it would be apart from my volition and that of other men, and the course of evolution as a whole, inclusive of the effects of human volition. Wisdom "after the event" is not enough, although it may be helpful; and Dr Waddington's thesis, incomplete in itself, needs something more than a knowledge of "the way in which things have come to pass" before it can provide a practical guide for actual human conduct, individual or corporate. It is significant that the acute problem of the relation of the individual to society receives very scanty treatment in the essay.

The intending reader of *Science and Ethics* should not be deterred by these criticisms. Any attempt at a positive statement of ethical theory has peculiar difficulties; and the fact that Dr Waddington has had the courage to face them is not to his discredit. The value of the book lies in its revelation of the mental attitude of those who approach the judgment of behaviour in the atmosphere of science, and one hopes that it will administer a jolt to those who can imagine the approach to theology and ethics only in terms restricted to classics or literature.

CAMBRIDGE. C. D. WADDAMS.

THE LITERARY OUTLOOK. By S. L. Bethell. Christian Newsletter Books. Sheldon Press. 2s. 6d.

In three chapters of survey and two of prescription, Mr Bethell surveys the literary scene and advocates remedies. The survey is on familiar Cambridge lines; Eliot is alone left standing like St Paul's in a devastated area of highbrows, middlebrows and lowbrows—to use Mr Bethell's categories—with the detective story as a lowly companion. In the present disorder of beliefs and practice, the critic has acquired a share of the writer's "mantle of apostolicity"; and Mr Bethell points out that all critics go beyond their sphere since their value-judgments are based on extra-literary beliefs; therefore, he urges, there is scope for "a body of sound and respected Christian criticism," "founded admittedly upon Christian principle" and acceptable as "authority" by the Christian common reader (p. 85).

History, however, would seem to show that the best critics—Sidney, Johnson, Coleridge—have been without that sense of mission which fired Gosson, Collier or Tolstoi, whose work was founded more *admittedly* on Christian principle. Poets, the unacknowledged legislators, can embody their visions; but the judiciary is faced with the dilemma of a great blasphemer like Baudelaire or a great pagan like Yeats. In a recent number of *Scrutiny*, a periodical several times mentioned by Mr Bethell, Dr Leavis has protested that the Christian too often confounds edification with appreciation, and that an agnostic is really in a better position to judge a work of Christian art !

Moreover, literature cannot be isolated from the other arts; *e.g.* the poetic surrealists whom Mr Bethell rightly chastises are parasitic on the painters; but it is extremely hard to apply Christian principles to painting, architecture or music.

Such are the reflections which Mr Bethell's book provokes. It is meant for the general reader and might well be used, *e.g.*, for young people's study circles or as the basis for a debate. Some of his transitions from the general to the particular, which seem somewhat abrupt in ordinary reading, would be useful in such a case, to which the symmetrical divisions of the subject are also well adapted.

London. M. C. Bradbrook.

Submission in Suffering. A Comparative Study of Eastern Thought. By H. H. Rowley. University of Wales Press Board. 2s. 6d.

In this valuable comparative study of the response to innocent suffering inculcated in the principal Asiatic religions Professor Rowley deliberately refrains from discussing the wider problem of evil; but, nevertheless, the data brought under review indirectly throw light on the ultimate philosophical and theological issues, thereby adding to the significance of the inquiry. Beginning with the teaching of the Bible it is shown that the Hebrew writers, like Mencius and other Chinese thinkers, recognized innocent suffering as a fact of experience without reconciling it with justice. In Jewish circles the shifting of responsibility for present tribulations on the previous generation, as in the Indian Laws of Manu, has been both maintained and contested, and the same position is adopted in the New Testament, where our Lord is represented as rebuking those who interpreted suffering and misfortune in terms of retribution. That iniquity does produce a heritage of sorrow is not and cannot be denied; but while the principle is inherent in the social nature of man, the attitude of the prophets, it is explained, was directed against the paralysing quality of submissiveness.

In Indian speculation, again, the doctrine of karma and metempsychosis linked sin and suffering as cause and effect until in Upanishadic mysticism the only escape from the weary round of rebirth is release from the illusion of life. In the absence of any memory of the deeds committed in a former life, as Dr Rowley points out, it is impossible to recognize that sufferings are a just penalty of individual guilt. Similarly in Buddhism, where man is regarded as a composite

of elements destined to dissolve, the attempt to equate karma and "character" fails because nothing is passed on from one generation to the next. Submission is the complete passivity.

The Confucian emphasis on the innate moral sense in man raised the problem of innocent suffering, but only produced fatalistic acquiescence in the inevitable endured with fortitude, while the Taoist ideal was passive submission to Tao, the absence of effort or striving in the face of adversity. All such fatalism was repudiated by Mo-tze as tending to produce idleness, and in Islam Muhammad shifted the responsibility to the sovereign will of Allah. To submit to His all-wise decrees is the supreme duty of man, and this conviction upholds a Muslim in adversity "because he knows that out of an adversity which is by the order of the good God will undoubtedly come good." It is true that the Islamic attitude to submission in suffering is on a higher plane than that of the Indian or Chinese thinkers, though Mencius regarded suffering as a divine discipline for the development of character, and in the Upanishads the educative value of the doctrine of karma is recognized. The refining influence of chastening as set forth in the Old Testament and the rabbinical literature is discussed in an illuminating manner, and the monograph closes with an evaluation of the quality of submission in the self-offering of Christ in the Passion.

The research that lies behind this brochure is out of all proportion to its size, and the complete survey of the literature in the classified bibliography will be a great boon to future students of the subject.

LEEDS. E. O. JAMES.

THE SECOND SPRING, 1818-1852. A Study of the Catholic Revival in England. By Denis Gwynn. Burns Oates. 9s.

Before the Emancipation Act Roman Catholics in England were an insignificant minority; to-day the Roman Church has a position of sufficient importance to make it natural that the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster should join the Anglican Archbishops in pronouncements on public affairs. The traditional English suspicion of Popery, if less crude in its manifestations than in the past, is perhaps not much weaker; indeed, according to Dr Henson, such an inherited dislike of the Roman See is for many Englishmen their last link with the Christian religion. But to-day the Roman Church is intellectually respectable as it was not in the first quarter of the last century, and it is numerically strong enough to impress party politicians, who have to take it into account in the calculations proper to their game. This transformation of its position was the work of the Revival in the nineteenth century. Mr Gwynn describes its course in the years between the reopening of the English College at Rome after the revolutionary wars and the first synod of Pius IX's new hierarchy. At that synod Newman preached the celebrated sermon from which the title of this book is derived. As one would expect from its author, the book is a sound and competent piece of journeyman work, drawing its material largely from the published biographies of the principal actors in the

Revival, among whom Mr Gwynn would reckon Fr Barberi and the pre-Tractarian converts Kenelm Digby and Ambrose Phillips. The narrative recounts in some detail the restoration of the hierarchy which led to the last great outbreak of Protestant fanaticism in England (the rumpus over the Revised Prayer Book was very small beer in comparison), and it covers some very familiar ground at a steady jogtrot pace in its account of Newman's collapse as an Anglican and his entry into the Roman communion. The leaders of the Revival whom Mr Gwynn depicts are men of very great interest, Newman supremely so and the others also in their lesser way, Wiseman with his humility and flamboyant style, that entertainingly eccentric genius Pugin, and such a minor figure as Dr Bowdon, who disapproved of Wiseman's projected retreats for the clergy on the Italian model and described them as "solitary confinement for ten days in darkened rooms reflecting seriously on the state of our interior." But for all the wealth of material to the writer's hand there is little in *The Second Spring* to match the charming, delicate and skilful portraiture of Dr David Matthew's *Catholicism in England*.

England, unlike other countries, has now no native Roman Catholic tradition. As Mr Donald Attwater has said, "For historical reasons the complexion of our Catholicism is what may be called Italo-Irish." It was in the Revival which Mr Gwynn describes that the old English Roman Catholic tradition disappeared and the new Italo-Irish complexion was formed. Irish emigration had been going on from the eighteenth century, but it increased enormously during the terrible famine years 1845-8, whose historical significance so few of the English seem to appreciate. At that time, through deaths and emigration to America and England, the population of Ireland fell by two and a half millions. The Irish who flocked from starvation to the squalid poverty of the English industrial towns and in those horrible surroundings maintained a noble loyalty to their religion gave the Roman Church in England what the Left Wing would call its mass basis. The Italian element was the work of Wiseman and the enthusiastic converts, and those who, like Dr Bowdon, viewed them with dislike were not merely old-fashioned and reactionary any more than were Palmer and the old high-and-dry Anglicans.

Mr Gwynn's book is called a study, but I have preferred to describe it as a narrative, for in the main it relates the story of the Revival with but little attempt at analysis or appraisement. Anyone who wants a clear and continuous narrative of this kind will find it admirable.

R. P. McDermott.

Ardclinis Rectory,
Carnlough, Co. Antrim.

The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God. By A. R. Johnson. University of Wales Press Board. 2s.

This dissertation was originally read as a paper before the Society for Old Testament Study at its July meeting in Cambridge, 1939. It is now published without alteration, and consequently readers un-

acquainted with the Semitic languages should be warned to expect, in a work addressed primarily to Semitic scholars by one of their number, frequent Hebrew words, printed without transliteration, and occasional cognate parallels. Yet this fact should by no means discourage the keen student from giving the work the careful attention it deserves.

The writer, after surveying the Israelite conception of man, uses his conclusions to throw light upon the Israelite conception of God, in whose image, according to Gen. i, 26, man was made. A most striking feature noted is the way in which the Hebrew thinkers regarded personality, both human and divine, as possessing almost unlimited extensions of its effectiveness. Thus the spoken word, the name of a person, his property, and even his household, are instanced as examples of the extended self. Numerous illustrations are given from the Old Testament to show that this is equally true of God and man, and references are made to the cognate languages, suggesting that the idiom was in no way peculiar to the Hebrews. The English translations used are presumably the writer's own, although there is no statement to this effect.

Further evidence is brought to show how this idiom results in what the writer terms, perhaps not very happily, the "oscillation" between the One and the Many in the conceptions of God and man. Recognition of this characteristic of Hebrew thought, again shown to be paralleled in other Semitic writings, is a satisfactory explanation of what otherwise appears to be a confusion between two conceptions of the social unit, as an association of individuals on the one hand and as a corporate personality on the other.

In the concluding paragraph brief mention is made of some of the consequences of the thesis, if accepted, for the understanding of both Jewish and Christian doctrine. The development of Christian trinitarianism out of Jewish monotheism, the relation between polytheism and monotheism, and the Pauline conception of the community of Christian believers as the body of Christ, are singled out. The reader is tempted to wish that the writer had worked out more fully these and other points, such as the light thrown by his argument upon the identity of the Christian priest at the altar with Christ the High Priest on Calvary and in heaven. But this the thoughtful reader will be stimulated to do for himself, and after all such was hardly possible in a work of forty-odd pages.

C. Witton-Davies.

St Davids.

SHORTER NOTICES

The Jews in a Christian Social Order. By Olga Levertoff. Sheldon Press. 2s.

A year or two before the war I had two unforgettable experiences. I heard Miss Levertoff lecture on the spiritual relationship between Jews and Christians, and I heard her father, Dr Paul Levertoff, preach the Three Hours' Devotion on Good Friday. In respect of the former I would say—misquoting slightly from Dr Hewlett Johnson's preface

to this able little book—"From such a quarter this essay demands serious attention." And with regard to the latter, that it was a striking example of the truth of the author's contention that, "In addition to the development of fellowship and witness, the exploration of the theological possibilities of an interpretation of New Testament problems, and particularly of Christology, in terms derived from the (first-hand) knowledge of Jewish thought and literature, must become the province of Jewish Christians."

The book is written in three parts. In Part I Miss Levertoff deals with the Jewish problem as she sees it, together with reasons for anti-semitism. She discusses Christianity and the racial heresy in general terms, and particularly in relation to the theories of the German theologian Professor Kittel.

In the second part, "Christian Philosophy and the New Barbarism," the author—characteristically—finds it "refreshing to turn from the perverted thinking of Professor Kittel to the sane outlook of another recent writer on the Jewish problem." This is Professor Berdyaev, who, "liberated as he is by an understanding of the universalistic standpoint of genuine Christianity from the childish and primitive conceptions of blood and soil," is, she considers, "well adapted to a consideration of this question in all its complexity."

The third and shortest part of the book is perhaps the most difficult and the least convincing. It deals with the realistic interpretation of history, and contrasts the Jewish insistence on "this-worldliness" with the other-worldliness of "uncorrected" Christianity. Something seems to be lacking here. It is probably true to argue, as Miss Levertoff does, that "Israel is the principal actor in a drama in which all are participants, and her rôle has largely determined our past, as ours may determine her future." But all the facts must be taken into consideration; and one misses here, and throughout the book, any effective allusion to the strong apocalyptic element to be found both in later Judaism and in the consciousness and teaching of the Messiah.

MARGUERITE HOWSE.

PRESTEIGNE.

H. R. L. SHEPPARD: LIFE AND LETTERS. By R. Ellis Roberts. John Murray. 15s.

I find it difficult to review this book because I so profoundly disagree with it: I think it should never have been published for general circulation. It is delightfully written, and it throws some light on the life and character of that lovable man about whom it is written. But, in my opinion, it must give a largely false impression of him to anyone who was not personally acquainted with him. To me it seems to be more in the nature of an emotional appreciation of a hero by his devotee than a balanced biography.

I had the pleasure of knowing Dick Sheppard for as long a time as did the author of this biography; on many occasions I enjoyed the privilege of talks with him alone. Emotional he certainly was, often impulsive and sometimes sentimental; but there was always about him

a balancing factor of realism and reasoned restraint. He suffered in himself and for others; he was at war in himself between his impatience on the one hand and his deep affectionate sympathy on the other; yet I know of no evidence to suggest that he was a divided personality. The basic theme of Mr Roberts's book, the Dick and Lawrie hypothesis, is, I think, a figment of the biographer's imagination.

In writing of the period of his life when Dick Sheppard was at St Paul's Mr Roberts has not, in my opinion, shown a very proper historical sense in his appreciation either of the affairs of the Cathedral or of the part played in them by Dick himself and the other canons. It was not his view that his colleagues were concerned with the sabotage of spiritual effort. He was impatient with and opposed to their ideas; but he recognized that they acted and spoke with the Christian interests of the Cathedral at heart, and he had an affection for all of them.

In my opinion it is to be deplored if future generations will have to assess the life and work and character of Dick Sheppard by reference to this biography alone.

There is one further remark I feel bound to make. To have dragged to light factors in his home life which he himself was so careful to conceal from the public gaze is surely to have done a disservice to the memory of the very sensitive and affectionate Dick Sheppard.

L. J. Collins.

A Companion to the Communion Service. A Devotional Manual. By W. Robinson. Oxford University Press. 2s. 6d.

Too often in reunion discussions the skeleton of doctrine is studied but the flesh and blood of worship and the devotional life are forgotten. We all know what a messy sort of jelly the body without the skeleton is, but we are apt to forget that a skeleton falls apart if there is no body to hold it together. Much of the nonsense that is talked by Catholics who have read all that Protestant theologians have to say in their learned treatises is due to the fact that, despite this study, they are almost totally ignorant of the living religion of those they read; and in consequence the bits of the skeleton do not fit together.

This little book is a devotional manual written primarily for those of the "Reformed Tradition." It is a valuable introduction into the heart of their religion. Those who are concerned for the reunion of Christendom should not fail to enter in by this door, and to enter with reverence. They will find much within that will warm their hearts, and much of the greatest interest. Dr Micklem, in his Introduction, suggests that Anglican and Roman Catholic scholars may observe, "possibly with a twinge of envy, how closely we have preserved the ancient Catholic and Apostolic Order." What may naturally appear to Anglicans more doubtful is whether they have preserved the fullness of Catholic doctrine. Yet there is a welcome stress on some parts of Catholic doctrine which are still too often neglected, not only by Dr Robinson's fellow "Reformed Christians," but also by many members of our own communion.

It is unfortunate that war-time restrictions of space do not permit the detailed theological and liturgical review of this little book which it merits.

NINETY-FOUR COLLECTS FOR THE CHRISTIAN YEAR. By R. D. Acland. S.P.C.K. 1s.

The idea of the theme of the Proper running through each Mass and culminating in an appropriate post-Communion is a sound one. The enrichment of the Liturgy, when this idea is adequately fulfilled, is undoubted. It must, however, be admitted that it is only in a minority of cases that the idea is at all adequately fulfilled, even in the Latin; while the majority of efforts made in unofficial Missals to translate into English post-Communions which were already jejune in the original make one appreciate the wisdom of the compilers of our Prayer Book. Better by far a job half done, but good so far as it goes, than the dreadful cacophonies from which we sometimes suffer. None the less, the lack of the theme of the Propers, and especially the lack of post-Communions for each Sunday and Saint's Day, is a deficiency in our Liturgy. It is to be hoped that in any further revision of the Prayer Book the work of the original compilers will be completed.

The Bishop of Bombay has attempted to produce "Collects referring to the contents of the Epistle and Gospel," for use when such are required "as post-Communions, or in Sunday Schools or Bible Classes or at the end of a sermon or address." The variety of occasions for which their use is contemplated precludes these prayers from having the specific Eucharistic reference which is perhaps desirable in a post-Communion; but they fulfil the purpose for which they were designed. The crime of perpetrating bad Collects still flourishes, but the Bishop is never guilty of it. This booklet forms a very complete answer to the silly idea that the art of writing Collects is dead. It is to be hoped that the use of the Collects will be authorized in many dioceses, so that they may be put to the test of experience. It will be strange if some of them do not find their way into any future revision of the Book of Common Prayer.

MICHAEL BRUCE.

CHIDDINGFOLD.

CORRESPONDENCE

"IS IT CHRISTIAN?"

To the Editor of THEOLOGY.

SIR,

Mr Chaning-Pearce asks, concerning the pacifist community movement of which he (too generously) counts me "a patron-prophet"—Is it Christian?[1] Since I happen to be the only living member of the quaternity he names as its prophets, it behoves me to make some reply, or at least to give Mr Chaning-Pearce more data to frame his own.

[1] See THEOLOGY, February, 1943, p. 46.

Is it Christian? I simply do not know. Some of its members—if one may speak of members of a movement so little organized—profess and call themselves Christians; some do not. At a wild guess, perhaps half and half. I think the majority of its members—probably even of those who individually reckon themselves Christians—would be chary of accepting the designation. They would want first to know what it meant.

The movement is a religious movement, I am convinced. That it would confess to *some* affiliation with Christianity, I think is true. But probably it is best understood as a positive rebellion against the individualism into which Protestant Christianity had degenerated and which so subtly combined with industrialism to produce modern Mammonism.

This rebellion against individualism has two main aspects. It is a reaction against the depersonalization of human relations produced by modern industrialism, whereby man is an individualist because there is, so to speak, nothing else for him to be. His membership of the national "community" is morally meaningless. Hence the necessity of totalitarianism. The first business of the community movement is to create the experience of real community, in which persons feel an immediate sense of responsibility for one another and for the whole.

The second aspect of the reaction from individualism is the emphasis on agricultural community. Good husbandry belongs to the essence of the matter; for we are engaged in the effort to rediscover a fundamental clue to right human living, which I can only express as a right reverence for the earth whereby we live. We are struggling to break through the veil of abstraction which, in this machine civilization, separates men from the primal realities and their discipline. We are not enemies of the machine; but we are determined, in so far as in us lies, to control it, to make it the servant of the good life and human well-being, instead of the destructive tyrant. This whole effort involves a morality and a religion.

Is it merely a "natural morality" and a "natural religion"? Again I cannot say. If I were sure it was, I should not hesitate to say so. But I am not sure. For I have to confess that, except for my own (perhaps subjective) interpretation of Christianity, I myself might never have persevered along this way.

It is seven or eight years now since I first began to try to "educate into community" myself and others. I found, by experience, that I needed all my reserves of Christian faith to stand up to it; and in calling upon these reserves I discovered that I had to be a pacifist as well. The kind of charity I needed to keep going at all was a charity which must renounce war. Pacifism is, for me, the direct consequence of the effort towards community. Reciprocally, an enhanced effort towards community is the consequence of pacifism. In so far as the effort has continually developed and gradually taken more definite shape, it has, for me personally, been constantly suffused and made creative by this subjective Christianity of mine. Christianity, in this obscure sense, is the matrix of it all.

One might describe it as an attempt, quite literally, to bring Christianity to earth—completely to earth, in a full awareness of the whole

historical and sociological crisis in which we stand; an attempt to find out, in first-hand experience, what happens when the *whole* of one's life is felt to be under the scrutiny of Christ; to find out what one feels might be His answers to problems He did not answer, "making the resultant happiness the test of every step of the journey," to use Max Plowman's words.

For we believe that at the root of the brutalized contemporary anarchy, and the thinly disguised longing for death which pervades it, lies a basic frustration of human life. The frustration is at once instinctive, moral, and religious. Man, deprived of what Mr H. J. Massingham calls "permanent satisfaction in the act of living," of necessity turns and rends himself, using as his weapons the machines that have been allowed to stifle his humanity. Christianity had its original meaning in the context of a peasant community, and retained its creative power only so long as a peasant economy survived; that is to say, so long as the natural community held in check the extravagances of individual salvationism. You will never reconcile Christianity with the modern world. By the attempt to do so, Christianity will only be driven into an ecstasy of world renunciation. The way to supernatural piety can be found only by rediscovering natural piety.

Whether the effort is Christian, or whether the result will be, I do not know. I am inclined to believe that it cannot be Christian in any *accepted* sense of that word. Anyhow, I leave it to Mr Chaning-Pearce to judge.

J. Middleton Murry.

Lodge Farm,
Thelnetham, *via* Diss, Norfolk.
March 11, 1943.

THE SOUTH INDIA SCHEME OF UNION

To the Editor of Theology.

Sir,

I shall be grateful if you will allow me to make the following remarks on your editorial on the South India Scheme of Union.

1. Your challenge on the doctrinal question of episcopacy is as important as it is disturbing to Anglicans. I would suggest, however, that the position in South India has real analogies with that of the Church of England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when, as you are prepared to agree, a refusal to define the theological principles at stake was opportune. It must be remembered that a leading conception of the Scheme of Union is that it is a basis on which the uniting Churches may *begin* to live together. It is expected that the united Church will amend its constitution as the several parts of the now divided Church of South India grow together into a common mind and spirit (*Scheme*, pp. 3, 25). Proposals for union with the Travancore Syrians might very possibly be an occasion which demanded deeper consideration of the doctrines underlying an episcopal system.

2. You ask, "How far is the scheme genuinely indigenous?" No, it is almost entirely Western in spirit. It could not be anything else, for Indian Christians are as yet only beginning to develop indigenous

thought and characteristics. It may surely be hoped that an Indian Church which in union has found a synthesis of the different sides of truth and life brought to it by Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians and Congregationalists will be in a better position to fulfil the hope of the Lambeth Conference that it would develop "the Indian expression of the spirit, the thought and the life of the Church Universal." I should add that while foreign missionaries led the work in the Joint Committee, the Indian members were by no means merely followers.

3. Younger and older elements in the South India churches. There is a fairly strong group of younger men whose chief interest is the "Indianization" of Christianity; and these hold aloof from or are hostile to the present scheme of union as being "merely Western." Otherwise, the younger generation is as urgent for union as the older, and ready to accept the present scheme as at any rate a first step. The Joint Committee has always included several of the younger leaders of the negotiating Churches.

4. There will certainly be common theological seminaries in the united Church, and efforts are already being made that the present Anglican seminaries should unite with others. While in South India the attitude of teachers in seminaries will be that the Church needs pastors rather than theologians, I think that there is good hope, especially with the influence of the Methodists, that biblical and dogmatic theology will be treated seriously.

I am, etc.,

LONDON. F. J. WESTERN, Bp.

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